

177. The Gospel of John—17:11-13

“With Jesus Behind the Veil” Part 11

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In our study in John’s Gospel, we have come to what many call—the *“real Lord’s prayer”*!

This prayer is divided up into 3 main parts:

Jesus Prays for Himself—verses 1-5

Jesus Prays for His Disciples—verses 6-19

Jesus Prays for All Believers—verses 20-26

We are currently in the second main part of this prayer—**“Jesus Prays for His Disciples.”**—which covers verses 6-19.

I want to say one more time—at this point Jesus is less than 12 hours from the Cross.

When someone is near death, they don’t want to talk about frivolous things like sports and the weather—they want to talk to the people on earth they love the most (family and dear friends) about the things in life that matter most.

Jesus did that with His disciples in Chapters 13 thru 16—but now He prays for them to His Father in Chapter 17.

Here in these verses Jesus is praying for His disciples from a heart of deep love and concern for their welfare and for the work He was about to turn over to them to carry on—the work of saving souls and building the Kingdom. This section of Scripture contains what He was most concerned about for them on the night before His crucifixion—as we have been studying for thce last few weeks.

John 17:11-13 (NKJV)

¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world [His public ministry to the world was officially done], but these are in the world [His true disciples], and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. ¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition [Judas—a counterfeit disciple], that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

In verses 11-13 Jesus is praying for His true disciples—and He prays for them that the Father would grant them 3 requests:

- 1. That they would be kept by the Father—verse 11a**
- 2. That they would have unity with one another—verse 11b**
- 3. That they would have Jesus’ joy fulfilled in them—verse 13**

In verse 12 the Lord mentions how that everyone that the Father had given Him (as His disciples) He kept and “lost none of them except the son of perdition that the Scripture might be fulfilled.”

And even though that statement belongs with verse 11—I’d like to handle it separately after we cover the 3 requests that Jesus made for His true disciples.

1. That they would be kept by the Father—verse 11a

John 17:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world [His true disciples], and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me...

When it comes to being ‘kept’ by God as His people—there is both a *positional* application (eternal security), and then a *practical* application (victory over the devil in terms of spiritual warfare—verse 15).

a. Positional keeping (eternal security)

You will be kept (actually as a believer you ‘are being kept’) because you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and because your Savior is interceding for you in heaven (Hebrews 7:25)—

Ephesians 1:13 (NKJV)

¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise...

Paul is telling us that as soon as a person believes the gospel and receives Christ as their Savior—at that very instant they are *sealed* with the Holy Spirit. By saying this Paul is drawing this analogy from a practice that was very common in his day.

If we’re going to understand what it means to be “*sealed with the Holy Spirit*”—we have to first come to understand what a seal was used for and what it represented.

In those days not too many people could read or write—so a man would have a signet ring made that could be used to represent his signature. The ring would then be pressed into wax or some other soft substance that would eventually harden and act as his *seal*. These seals would be used for a number of purposes—I’ll mention a couple of the more common uses.

1) Ownership

A seal spoke of *ownership* and would have been very familiar to Paul’s readers in Ephesus.

A merchant from Ephesus would often sail across the Aegean Sea to Greece or some other place and buy merchandise putting his seal on it signifying that he had bought and paid for it, and it now belonged to him. It would then be loaded onto a ship and sailed to the port of Ephesus where he would go down to the dock and claim his property by showing the shipper his signet ring.

Again, the seal made from the buyer’s signet ring spoke of *ownership*.

When you agreed to become the *property* of God in salvation by receiving Jesus as your Lord and Savior—He sealed you with the Holy Spirit declaring His *ownership* of you. In other words, God bought and paid for you with the blood of His Son—which means you now belong to Him!

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

It is a finished transaction—it's a done deal!

One author said it well—

"When the Holy Spirit seals believers, He marks them as God's divine possessions, who from that moment on entirely and eternally belong to Him, The Spirit's seal declares the transaction of salvation as divinely official and final."

2) Security

The second thing a seal spoke of was security.

Matthew 27:62-66 (NKJV)

⁶² On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, ⁶³ saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.' ⁶⁴ Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him *away*, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make *it* as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

That seal had the full weight of the Roman government behind it—no one but Caesar himself could legally break that seal. So, the second thing a seal represented was security.

Since God has sealed you in Christ with the Holy Spirit the moment you put your trust in Jesus—you are **absolutely secure**. You're secure because to break that seal it would take someone greater than God and since no one is greater than God—you have absolutely nothing to worry about, your salvation is absolutely eternally secure!

➤ *"Yes, but I can still blow it and lose my salvation."* → Are you greater than God?

Noah and his family in the ark were a type of the believer in Christ. Some people have a theology of salvation that's as though Noah was told by God to build the ark, put the animals inside—and then make pegs on the outside of the ark for them to grab on to! And if they were still hanging on after the Flood—they made it!

Or in other words, *"If I can hang on to my salvation till Jesus comes or I die—I've made it!"*

But as we read the story, when the ark was finished God said to Noah and his family, *"Come (not 'go') into the ark"*—signifying that God was inside the ark! God then shut the door on Noah and his family sealing them inside the ark—just as God sealed you in Christ with the Holy Spirit at the moment of your salvation.

Noah couldn't have gotten out if he had wanted to—but he never would have wanted to because he knew that inside the ark was safety and life—while outside the ark was judgment and certain death.

The fact that he was sealed in the ark didn't make him feel *trapped* it made him feel secure! Listen, no doubt during the flood, as the ark was tossed to and fro, Noah fell down many times inside the ark—but he never fell out of the ark and perished.

Even so you will stumble and fall many times while 'in Christ' (1 John 1:9-10)—but you'll never, ever fall out of Christ and perish—

Jude 1:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present *you* faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

Romans 8 is one of the greatest chapters in all the New Testament in proving the absolute eternal security of the believer in Christ.

It starts with "*No condemnation*" and ends with "*no separation.*"

Romans 8:38-39 (NKJV)

³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Are you a 'created thing' this morning? If so, then not even you can separate yourself from being in Christ and go to hell.

➤ So, I guess the question is—are you "*in Christ this morning?*"

If you are, you are secured there safely forever.

If not, then you're outside the safety and protection of Christ—and the wrath of God abides on you. (John 3:36) All you have to do to escape the judgment of God is to accept His invitation to come to Jesus and take refuge in Him by faith.

When you do you will be placed safe and secure in Christ, sealed with the Holy Spirit, and guaranteed that your voyage will end in heaven where the Father will claim you as His possession forever.

Of course, when we are raptured, we will receive our new glorified body and our redemption will be complete (Romans 8:23-24) as God will finally and completely fulfill the promise He made to us (John 10:28).

Until that time God has given us the Holy Spirit who is the **guarantee** of our heavenly inheritance until we experience the full redemption of those He has bought and paid for with the blood of His Son.

Ephesians 1:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ who [the Holy Spirit] is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

The word translated 'guarantee' (Greek is 'arabon') could be translated "*down payment*" or "*engagement ring.*" (Comment)

Let's look briefly at John 10:

John 10:27-28 (NKJV)

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life...

As I said when we studied John 10—Jesus ties eternal life to a person making Him their Shepherd.

- *“How do I know if I’ve made Jesus my Shepherd?”—very simply, a shepherd is one who leads the sheep—and the sheep follow him—are you following Jesus?*

John 10:27-28 (NKJV)

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand...

- *“Yes, Jesus gives us eternal life—but I have to be faithful or else I lose it.”*

Jesus anticipated that response, and so directly after saying **“I give them eternal life”** said, **“and they shall never perish”** (Greek is in the middle voice—*‘and they shall never do anything to cause themselves to perish’*). Then He further adds, **“neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”**

**Our faithfulness to hold onto Him isn’t the issue—
the issue is His faithfulness to hold onto us!**

Eternal life is given the moment a person believes in and receives Jesus as their Savior (John 1:12)—and starting from that moment on, as Jesus Himself taught us here—*“You will never perish!”* That’s because God has you in His hands and is holding tightly (and eternally) onto you as a Christian.

Again, some Christians would respond, *“But I still think I can slip thru His fingers and be lost if I’m not faithful to live a holy life.”*

As Donald Grey Barnhouse once famously said, *“You can’t slip thru His fingers because you are one of His fingers! You are a member of His Body!”*

John 10:28 (AMP)

²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never lose it or perish throughout the ages. [To all eternity they shall never by any means be destroyed.] And no one is able to snatch them out of My hand.

One Greek scholar said, *“The Greek is an emphatic, double negative with second aorist middle subjunctive of ‘apollumi’ (“to destroy”) which is the strongest Greek construction possible.”*

As one pastor said with regard to this—*“Backslide they may, perish they won’t! Chastise you He may, disown you He won’t!”*

Listen, eternal life by its very definition has to mean uninterrupted life that goes on for eternity from the moment it is received—that is God’s promise to us based on *His* faithfulness not *ours*! That is the great difference between the Old Covenant under Moses and the New Covenant under Christ—the New Covenant is built on better promises!

The Old Covenant was a bilateral (two-party) covenant or promise where God and Israel each had a part to fulfill—if Israel failed to keep the law (if they were unfaithful), then God said He would no longer bless them with physical blessings. (Deuteronomy 27-28)

Moses hadn't even come down from Mount Sinai with the Tablets of the Law (terms of the covenant—Ten Commandments) before Israel had already broken them by worshipping the Golden Calf.

Any covenant of salvation where man has a part in it to do anything is doomed to failure, because we are not perfect, we are not faithful—we are prone to failure!

Look, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link—it matters not how strong or faithful God is in keeping *His* promise to give us eternal life—if we have a part to play in securing salvation we're doomed!

Hebrews 6:19

¹⁹ This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls [God's faithfulness to hold onto us], both sure and steadfast...

The whole idea of the New Covenant was to take the 'human link' out of the chain and make salvation entirely dependent upon God's power and faithfulness.

Romans 8:29-30 (NKJV)

²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

This section in Romans 8 is what some have called "*the golden-chain of salvation.*"

Every 'link' (truth) in this 'chain' relates to God and *His* faithfulness to keep *His* promise to us—"He foreknew—He predestined—He called—He justified—He glorified"—"He, He, He, He, He!!!"

We are nowhere in that chain—our faithfulness isn't a link found anywhere!

Our salvation is a promise that is unilateral and unconditional.

It's a promise that deals with the faithfulness of God and doesn't include our 'faithfulness' to do anything (like keep commandments, go to church, light candles, keep sacraments, pray the rosary etc.)!

Hebrews 10:23 (NKJV)

²³ Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

All of the promises in Scripture that relate to eternal life—are all unconditional, unilateral promises.

In other words, they don't depend on our faithfulness to do anything. ***They only depend on the faithfulness of One Person—God Almighty*** which means they are all unconditional promises and therefore our salvation is absolutely secure!

In other words, the Father has answered the prayer of His Son in John 17—He is keeping the disciples of Christ (the children of God) securely and safely in Christ sealed unto the day of redemption (heaven).

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower— please, reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

Want to know more? Click [here](#).